



# Town of Groton, Connecticut

45 Fort Hill Road  
Groton, CT 06340-4394  
Town Clerk (860)441-6640  
Town Manager  
(860)441-6630

## Meeting Minutes

### Town Council

**Mayor Harry A. Watson, Councilors Heather Sherman Bond, Kathryn M. Brown-Tracy, Catherine Kolnaski, Deborah B. Monteiro, Frank O'Beirne, Jr., Rita M. Schmidt, Paulann H. Sheets, and James L. Streeter**

**Tuesday, December 16, 2008**

**7:30 PM**

**Town Hall Annex - Community Room 1**

#### REGULAR MEETING

#### I. ROLL CALL

*The meeting was called to order at 7:31 p.m. by Mayor Harry Watson.*

Members Present: Mayor Watson, Councilor Bond, Councilor Brown-Tracy, Councilor Kolnaski, Councilor O'Beirne, Jr., Councilor Schmidt, Councilor Sheets and Councilor Streeter

Members Absent: Councilor Monteiro

*Also present were Town Manager Mark Oefinger, Assistant to the Town Manager Lee Vincent, Town Clerk Barbara Tarbox, and Office Assistant Lori Watrous.*

#### II. SALUTE TO THE FLAG

*The Salute to the Flag was led by Lee Vincent.*

#### III. RECOGNITION, AWARDS & MEMORIALS

*None.*

#### IV. RECEIPT OF CITIZENS' PETITIONS, COMMENTS AND CONCERNS

*None.*

#### V. RESPONSES TO CITIZENS' PETITIONS, COMMENTS AND CONCERNS

*None.*

#### VI. CONSENT CALENDAR

##### a. Approval of Minutes

##### 2008-0304 Approval of Minutes (Town Council)

##### RESOLUTION ACCEPTING TOWN COUNCIL MINUTES

RESOLVED, that the minutes of the Town Council meeting of December 2, 2008 are hereby accepted and approved.

**This Matter was Adopted on the Consent Calendar.**

*The minutes will be finalized to include two minor changes that were requested by Councilor Sheets.*

##### b. Administrative Items

##### 2008-0298 Special Trust Fund Contributions

##### RESOLUTION ACCEPTING CONTRIBUTIONS TO SPECIAL TRUST FUNDS

RESOLVED, that the Town Council hereby accepts contributions to the Town as follows:

Robert Ashworth - \$75.00 - Social Services Discretionary

Estate of Howard Diver c/o Marge Fondulas - \$500.00 - Social Services Discretionary

Fitch Senior High Students Penny Drive - \$167.00 - Social Services Discretionary

Paul and Carla Heschel - \$50.00 - Social Services Discretionary

Pamela Maury (Maryann and Ed Pribe's Anniversary) - \$100.00 - Social Services Discretionary

Sean McKeown - \$200.00 - Social Services Discretionary

Mystic Lions Club - \$1,500.00 - Social Services Discretionary  
Mystic Rotary & Liberty Bank - \$1,095.55 - Social Services Discretionary  
Poquonnock Bridge Neighborhood Association - \$100.00 - Social Services Discretionary  
St. Andrew Presbyterian Church - \$20.00 - Social Services Discretionary  
Joan Steinford - \$20.00 - Social Services Discretionary  
Richard Thomason - \$100.00 - Social Services Discretionary  
Lee Treadway - \$40.00 - Social Services Discretionary  
Sally and Ralph Whitney - \$50.00 - Social Services Discretionary  
Ann Wrynn (Maryann and Ed Priebe's Anniversary) - \$100.00 - Social Services Discretionary  
Various Donations - \$2,195.00 - Groton Utilities Assistance Program  
City of Groton Matching Funds - \$91.12 - Groton Utilities Assistance Program  
Pfizer Foundation Volunteer Program - \$1,000.00 - Library Discretionary  
L&M Alumni Association - \$50.00 - Library Discretionary  
Kane Family and Shoreline Diving Services, Inc. - \$2,500.00 - Parks and Recreation Revolving

**This Matter was Adopted on the Consent Calendar.**

**c. Deletions from the Town Council Referral List**

**2007-0299 Strategy and Negotiations Concerning Collective Bargaining**

**This Matter was Deleted from Referral List - No further action on the Consent Calendar.**

**2008-0266 Human Services Department - Discussion of Anticipated Needs**

**This Matter was Deleted from Referral List - No further action on the Consent Calendar.**

**2008-0301 Adoption of Ordinance on Property Tax Relief**

**This Matter was Deleted from Referral List - No further action on the Consent Calendar.**

**2008-0302 Community Foundation of Southeastern Connecticut Grant - Library**

**This Matter was Deleted from Referral List - Action to be taken on the Consent Calendar.**

**2008-0303 Amendment to Department of Environmental Protection Grant and Loan Agreement -  
Water Pollution Control Facility Upgrade Project**

**This Matter was Deleted from Referral List - Action to be taken on the Consent Calendar.**

**Passed The Consent Calendar**

A motion was made by Councilor Streeter, seconded by Councilor Schmidt, to adopt the Consent Calendar, including all the preceding items marked as having been adopted on the Consent Calendar.  
The motion carried unanimously

**VII. COMMUNICATION REPORTS (Other than Committee Reports)**

**a. Town Councilors**

*Councilor O'Beirne received several emails regarding next year's budget.*

*Councilor Kolnaski was a judge at the Christmas Lights Parade. She attended the Electric Boat annual breakfast meeting where it was stated that next year they will be hiring engineers, designers, and laborers. She attended a Ledge Light Health District meeting. Councilor Kolnaski, along with Councilor Schmidt, Councilor Monteiro and Mayor Watson, attended a joint Town Council/Stonington Board of Selectmen meeting.*

*Councilor Streeter received the same communications relating to the budget that were previously mentioned. He also received an email from the Groton Town Police Department Email Alert System regarding "Connecticut Teen Safe Driving Week" (December 14 - 20), which stated that the Police Department will be enforcing teen driving laws. The alert also encouraged all drivers to drive safely during the holiday season. Councilor Streeter remarked that two years ago steps were taken to establish a Groton Historical Society. The group has recently received non-profit status so they can actively start pursuing the association.*

*Councilor Bond attended the Chamber of Commerce annual dinner.*

*Councilor Sheets attended a DEP workshop entitled "Green and Growing Communities" and the first meeting of the Task Force on Climate Change and Sustainable Community. She received an email regarding a concern about subsidies to the Groton City and Groton Long Point police departments. Councilor Sheets received a call from State Senator Andrew Maynard. He would like to talk to the Council and respond to questions about the State grant for dredging Mumford Cove.*

*Councilor Schmidt received the same emails mentioned earlier. She attended a Mystic Chamber of Commerce meeting.*

*Councilor Brown-Tracy attended the Holiday Lights Parade and a budget meeting. She received the same communications as other Councilors.*

*Mayor Watson spoke about local government at Fitch Senior High School. He met with Paul Kadri, the new superintendent of schools, and would like to arrange for Mr. Kadri to meet the other Town Council members informally, perhaps before a Town Council or Committee of the Whole meeting. He attended the budget meeting, the Holiday Lights Parade, a Mystic Cooperative Task Force meeting, a Southeastern Connecticut Water Authority meeting, and a Chamber of Commerce dinner. Mayor Watson noted that the Mystic Streetscape Project will begin in the Spring. The Mayor expressed gratitude on behalf of the Town to Suisman Shapiro for their holiday donation of \$1,500 to the Groton Department of Social Services for the Energy Assistance Program.*

**b. Clerk of the Representative Town Meeting**

*The Town Clerk stated that the RTM will meet on December 17, 2008. The 7th District had scheduled a caucus to fill a vacancy, but due the fact that there will not be a quorum, the caucus has been cancelled.*

**c. Clerk of the Council**

*The Town Clerk stated that earlier tonight there was a ceremony for newly appointed Justices of the Peace. They were given the oath of office, followed by a discussion regarding responsibilities and procedures of the office. The Town Clerk will be attending a presentation by DEP on the sporting licence system. She stated that an update to the Guidebook for Agencies, Boards and Commissions should be ready for the Council to review at the next Committee of the Whole meeting. At present, only the permanent boards, committees, and commissions are outlined, leaving the temporary and regional boards for a future update. She has also received several election surveys from national, regional, and political organizations.*

**d. Town Manager**

*The Town Manager stated that the RTM will meet on December 17, 2008, at the Town Hall Annex. The Senior Center is closed from December 15-26, 2008 to allow for relocation and will re-open at the Noank School on December 29, 2008. As a reminder, he stated that Town offices will be open one-half day on December 24, and will be closed December 25-26, 2008 and January 1, 2009. Mr. Oefinger mentioned that the next Council meeting will be January 6, 2009. The Town Manager distributed a memo regarding changing the annual dates for golf course season passes. If the Council is inclined to suspend the rules, a resolution has been prepared to adopt these new dates.*

**e. Town Attorney**

*No report.*

**VIII. COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**a. Community & Cultural Development - Chairman Brown-Tracy**

*No meeting, no report.*

**b. Economic Development - Chairman Bond**

*No meeting, no report.*

**c. Education/Health & Social Services - Chairman Kolnaski**

*No meeting, no report.*

**d. Environment/Energy - Chairman Sheets**

*No meeting, no report.*

**e. Finance - Chairman Schmidt**

*No meeting, no report.*

**f. Personnel/Appointments/Rules - Chairman O'Beirne**

*No meeting, no report.*

**g. Public Safety - Chairman Streeter**

*No meeting, no report.*

**h. Public Works/Recreation - Chairman Monteiro**

*No meeting, no report.*

**i. Committee of the Whole - Mayor Watson**

*Mayor Watson remarked that the two items on tonight's agenda were discussed during the regular Committee of the Whole meeting, and there was also a special meeting of the Committee of the Whole with the Stonington Board of Selectmen.*

**IX. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

*Councilor Sheets raised a question regarding the "Executive Summary Draft of the Phase II School Improvement Project", specifically the language regarding racial balance and racial composition of schools. She would like to ensure that documents and decisions are done in a way that minimizes the chance of losing federal funding or being challenged in court.*

*Mayor Watson suggested setting up a joint meeting of the Council, the Phase II School Design Committee, and the Phase I School Design Committee members.*

*Councilor Kolnaski noted that these concerns have come up at both the Phase I and Phase II meetings.*

**X. NEW BUSINESS****2008-0302****Community Foundation of Southeastern Connecticut Grant - Library**

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING A GRANT APPLICATION TO THE COMMUNITY FOUNDATION OF SOUTHEASTERN CONNECTICUT FOR ENHANCEMENTS TO THE GROTON PUBLIC LIBRARY

WHEREAS, the Community Foundation of Southeastern Connecticut has announced the availability of a grant program called the "Love our Libraries Initiative," and

WHEREAS, the creation of an enclosed space and improved furnishings for our teens would ensure an enduring enhancement of services to all users of the Groton Public Library, and

WHEREAS, a condition of the Community Foundation grant is the assurance, by the Town, that the receipt of grant funds will not be used to displace funding or budget appropriations that would normally have been given to the library, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that Town Manager Mark R. Oefinger or his designee may apply for a Love our Libraries Initiative Grant of \$100,000 from the Community Foundation and may sign a letter of

intent, on behalf of the Town Council, to comply with the Foundation's criteria.

**A motion was made by Councilor Schmidt, seconded by Councilor Sheets, that this matter be Adopted.**

**The motion carried unanimously**

**2008-0303**

**Amendment to Department of Environmental Protection Grant and Loan Agreement -  
Water Pollution Control Facility Upgrade Project**

**RESOLUTION APPROVING THE AMOUNT OF BONDS TO BE SOLD FOR WATER  
POLLUTION CONTROL FACILITY**

WHEREAS, the Town of Groton (the "Town") approved Ordinance No. 233 at referendum on November 5, 1996, which appropriated \$10,388,000 and authorized borrowing in the same amount for additions and improvements to the Water Pollution Control Facility; and

WHEREAS, The Town approved Ordinance No. 242 at referendum on May 23, 2000, which appropriated an additional \$5,112,000 for the project and included in the project facilities to remove nitrogen from the wastewater and authorized borrowing in the same amount, for an aggregate appropriation and borrowing authorization of \$15,500,000; and

WHEREAS, the State authorized in Section 40 of Public Act No. 04-1, May 2004 Special Session, an additional grant in the amount of \$2,000,000 for the Town's Water Pollution Control Facility additions and improvements; and

WHEREAS, the Town appropriated an additional \$2,000,000 for the Water Pollution Control Facility additions and improvements to be funded from such State grant, for an aggregate appropriation of \$17,500,000; and

WHEREAS, the Town appropriated an additional \$3,400,000 for the project, which may be funded from balances in the Sewer Operating Fund and The Water Pollution Control Authority's portion of the Capital Reserve Fund, including amounts previously appropriated for certain projects for fiscal years 2005-2006 and 2006-2007, for an aggregate appropriation of \$20,900,000; and

WHEREAS, the Town has appropriated additional amounts for the project which aggregate \$2,044,000; and

WHEREAS, Ordinance Nos. 233 and 242 authorized the Town Manager, on behalf of the Town, to apply for and accept State grants to finance the project and State loans to finance the project, and to enter into any grant or loan agreement prescribed by the State; and

WHEREAS, the State has proposed to make grants available for the project from the Clean Water Fund in the amount of approximately \$4,074,717.16, of which \$452,362.60 is applicable to the \$2,044,000 additional amounts appropriated for the project, leaving \$3,622,354.56 grants;

RESOLVED, that any grants received by the Town pursuant to the proposed DEP agreement be applied first to reduce the amount of funds to be applied from balances in the Sewer Operating Fund and the Water Pollution Control Authority's portion of the Capital Reserve Fund which were previously approved to fund the additional \$3,400,000 appropriation, except for \$150,000 of such amount which is not eligible for grant funding; and thereafter to reduce the amount of borrowing for the project so that the remaining \$3,622,354.56 grant shall be applied to fund \$3,250,000 of the \$3,400,000 additional appropriation, leaving \$372,354.56 to reduce the remaining bond authorization when such grants are received; and

WHEREAS, the State has proposed to make a loan for the project from the Clean Water Fund in the amount of approximately \$12,864,411.44 which would require the Town to issue an aggregate amount of \$12,864,411.44 in bonds or obligations to be sold to the State at a 2% interest rate; and

WHEREAS, the Town to date has issued bonds and obtained other grants and provided other funding for the project in the amount of \$2,263,234, thereby reducing the aggregate \$15,500,000 bond authorization to \$13,236,766; and the receipt of the additional project grant in the amount of \$372,354.56 would reduce the aggregate bond authorization further to \$12,864,411.44; and

WHEREAS, Ordinances Nos. 233 and 242 authorized the Town Council to determine the amount of bonds or obligations to be sold;

FURTHER RESOLVED, that up to \$12,864,411.44 bonds or obligations be sold pursuant to Ordinances Nos. 233 and 242.

**A motion was made by Mayor Watson, seconded by Councilor Kolnaski, that this matter be Adopted.**

*The Town Manager stated that the primary purpose of this resolution is to be able to accept a combination of additional grant dollars and low-interest loans from the State before using CIP money.*

**The motion carried unanimously**

## **XI. OTHER BUSINESS**

### **Suspension of the Rules**

*A motion to suspend the rules to change the season for the golf course was made by Mayor Watson, seconded by Councilor Streeter and so voted unanimously.*

**2008-0307**

### **Annual Dates for Shennecossett Golf Course Season Passes**

#### **RESOLUTION CHANGING THE ANNUAL DATES FOR SHENNECOSSETT GOLF COURSE SEASON PASSES**

WHEREAS, on November 5, 2008 the Town Council approved 2009 rates for the Shennecossett Golf Course including season passes, and

WHEREAS, the Golf Advisory Board and the Parks and Recreation Commission have recommended a change in the annual dates for the season passes from a calendar year to April 1 - March 31 to be more accommodating to golfers' needs and financial situations, and

WHEREAS, changing the annual dates for season passes will mean that current season passes will be good until March 31, 2009 and 2009 passes will be good until March 31, 2010, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the annual dates for Shennecossett Golf Course season passes are changed from January 1 - December 31 to April 1 - March 31, effective with the current season passes.

**A motion was made by Mayor Watson, seconded by Councilor O'Beirne, Jr., that this matter be Adopted.**

*Councilor Sheets stated that she is in support of this resolution.*

**The motion carried unanimously**

### **Other Business Continued**

*Councilor Sheets would like to know if there is a detailed listing of the miscellaneous items that are on the Town Attorney's report and that represent 30% of the entire bill.*

*The Town Manager stated that he has a copy of the entire report, which includes itemization of all miscellaneous entries. The entire bill can be viewed if requested.*

## **XII. ADJOURNMENT**

*A motion to adjourn at 8:17 p.m. was made by Councilor Bond, seconded by Mayor Watson and so voted unanimously.*

*Attest:*

*Barbara Tarbox, Town Clerk  
Clerk of the Council*

*Lori Watrous, Office Assistant*